



Rural town of Denmark fading only history, 10 residents left

By Belinda Heine

Southern Illinoisan Correspondent

The small settlement of Denmark on the Pyatt Blacktop is a mere shadow of the town that used to thrive there. With coal-mining on all four sides, and fewer than 10 townspeople left, the town bravely, but barely, lives on.

According to several "old-timers" and an unpublished booklet written by the Rev. Paul Holder, the first settlers, many French Canadians, came into the Denmark precinct as early as 1818. The town was laid out by John D. Rees, and surveyed and platted on April 1, 1860. It was first called "John's Town", and later "Jack Town". It received its present name when Chris Witmac, a native of Denmark, became the owner of the first store in the town. As an honorary gesture the town was named for his homeland.

The first school, a 16-by-16 room, was built in 1825 out of roundlogs, and the teacher was by Robert Clark. A second school was built in 1894. It was burned in 1934 by a juvenile arsonist. He was later jailed for setting other fires as well. The third school was built in 1934, and was used

until the early 1950s, still just one room. The building was destroyed in 1982. In the early schools, sleigh riding was allowed at noon, and Halloween pranks included setting a wagon on the school roof.

A circuit-riding preacher held the only type of church service in the Denmark territory until 1835 when the first church was built. Many other churches followed, but the Denmark Baptist Church is the only one that remains.

By 1883, the town had a general store, a wagon maker, dress maker, a black smith shop, a wood working shop and a post office. The Denmark Post Office was the only one between Du Quoin and Chester for many years. The nearest railroad was still five miles away in Cutler.

In the beginning of this century, Denmark was a pretty rough place to be. Although the town never had a tavern, drunks often interrupted the church services. Fights were common. Once a man even was stabbed, and someone tried to dynamite the church, but failed. Town boys from Cutler refused to venture out to Denmark, but by

1930, things had begun to calm down.

The store had burned in 1917, and was not rebuilt until 1930, by Walter Carter. He bought eggs, poultry, and cream from the farmers, and even stayed open late so that the local boys could enjoy a few hands of cards. The favorite spot was the bench. Here tall tales were spun hours at a time, each man trying to out-do the other. Carter even opened up the store on Sunday evening just for the loafers. After all, the nearest entertainment spot was 10 miles away at the Percy theater.

One of the earliest local coal mines was the Higgerson Coal Mine a mile out of town. This underground mine started in 1933 and lasted into the early 1950s.

Denmark has now all but faded away. The old store still stands beside the church as a reminder of days gone by, and of a town that used to exist. By looking at the small and sleepy town of today's Denmark, one cannot imagine its rough past, but it's there, hidden between the buildings of yesteryear, and in the minds of those who remember it well.

DENMARK BAPTIST CHURCH

When Perry County was laid off into precincts, the south west part of the County became known as the southwestern precinct. It took in that part of the County starting at the southwest corner of the County and going north on Perry-Randolph line for four miles, thence east to big Galum Creek, then following the creek to the Jackson County line, then going west on the Perry-Jackson County line to the point of beginning.

Before the southwestern precinct was divided the people from what is now Willisville precinct had to go to Denmark to vote.

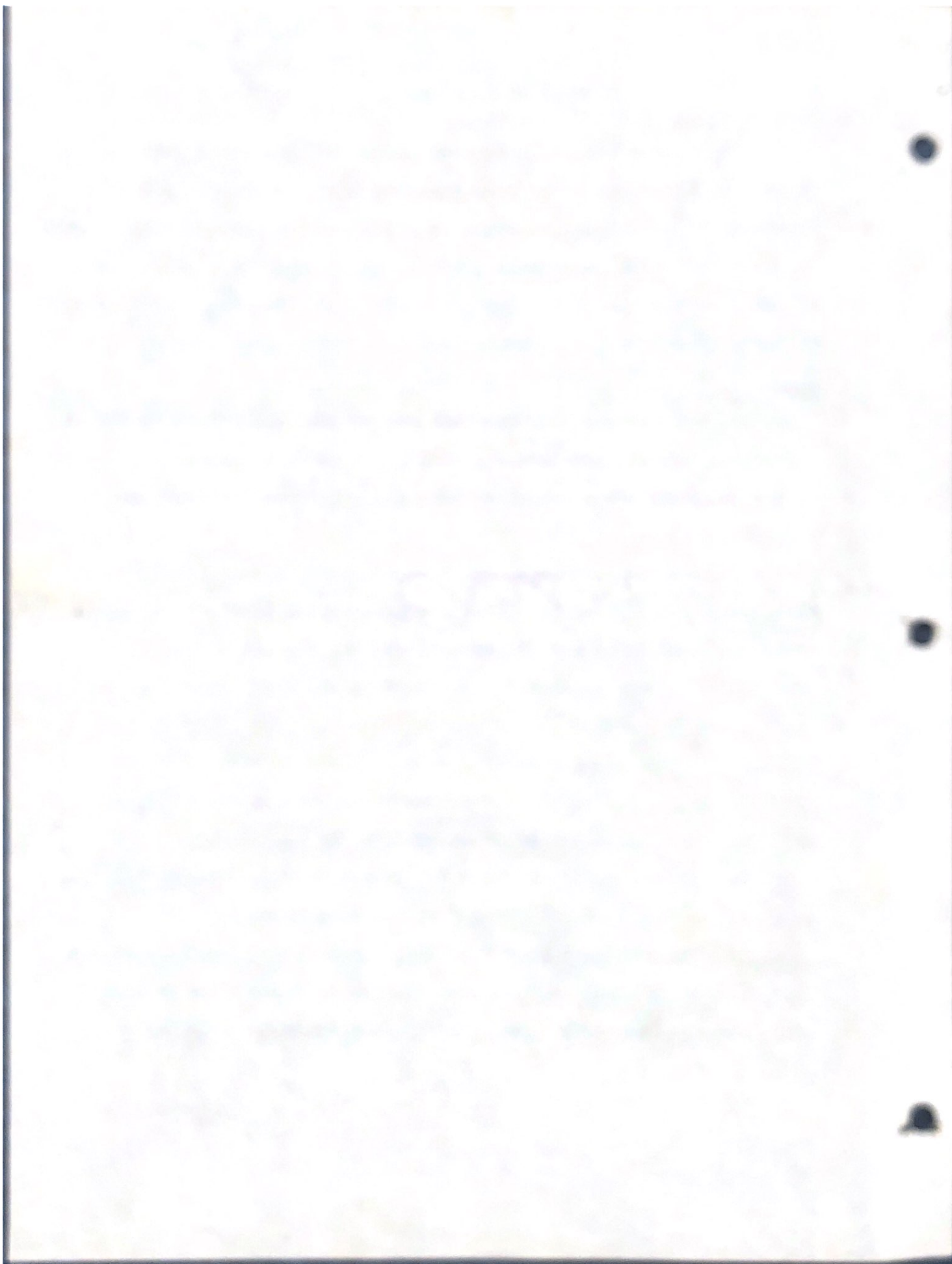
The southwestern was divided into two precincts. Denmark and Willisville.

The little Hamlet of Denmark is located near the center of Denmark precinct. One of the first settlers in the precinct was James Crain who settled on the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of sec. 13, 6S, R4W and became the owner of 160 acres by entering the same at the land office in Kaskaskia, May 14, 1818.

Simon Willard located in Sec. 2, 6S, R4, where he entered 504.6 acres of land Jan. 19, 1819. Benjamin Brown settled on the W $\frac{1}{2}$ of the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec 11, 6S, R4W which he entered Jan 14, 1819.

Richard Green, Robert Johnson and Robert Crow with their families were also living in this locality at the same time.

William Threlkill, Robert Gillihan, Jacob Short, and John Stuart were natives of Kentucky, Tennessee and New York and were leading characters in the early history of the County. Stephen Kelley was an early pioneer also.



#2

William McIntosh entered 320 acres in the N $\frac{1}{2}$ Sec 3, 6S, R4W.

Jonathan Bowerman entered the E $\frac{1}{2}$ of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of sec 6, 6S, R4W.

Denmark is situated near the center of the Denmark precinct. The nearest railroad station being at Cutler, five miles distance. The town was laid out by John D. Rees in the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of sec 24, 6S, R4W.

It was surveyed and platted by Robert Steele, County Surveyor on April 1, 1860. As John D. Rees had laid out the town people began to call it John's town, some time later they gave it the name of "Jack Town". It kept this name until Chris Wittmac came to "Jack Town" and bought a store. He did not like the name of the town, as he was a native of Denmark. ~~X~~ In some way they gave the name Dehmark since.
No-See LAST PAGE QWS

The first house in Denmark was built by John D. Rees whose family and those of several French Canadians were among the first to settle in this section. The house was a small frame building.

John D. Rees opened the first store in Denmark and the Postoffice was kept by Brown. The Post Office at Denmark was the only one between DuQuoin and Chester.

The first dry goods, groceries, shoes, plows and wagons were bought of Lyborger and Reid at Kaskaskia previous to 1827. Much of the trading was done with Col. Jones at Georgetown, Randolph County between 1827 and 1840.

The first grocery and dry goods store in Denmark precinct was kept by Jacob Short in 1827.

Mr. Cotton had the store sometime between 1837 and 1863.

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The first blacksmith shop was kept by John McClure in 1839.
There was a wagon shop in 1850 kept by Mr. Gadbuy.

Business in 1883:

Post Mistress: Mary Rees; General Store: William Boan; Wagon
Maker; James Eaton; Dress Maker: Mary Rees; Black Smith Shop:
J. T. Tessier. The shop was on the west side of Main Street across
from John Higgerson's store. The Wagon and Wood Working Shop was in
the south half of the building.

The first band grist mill in the precinct was built by a man
named Willard in 1819. It did pretty good work for a mill of its
kind for nine or ten years.

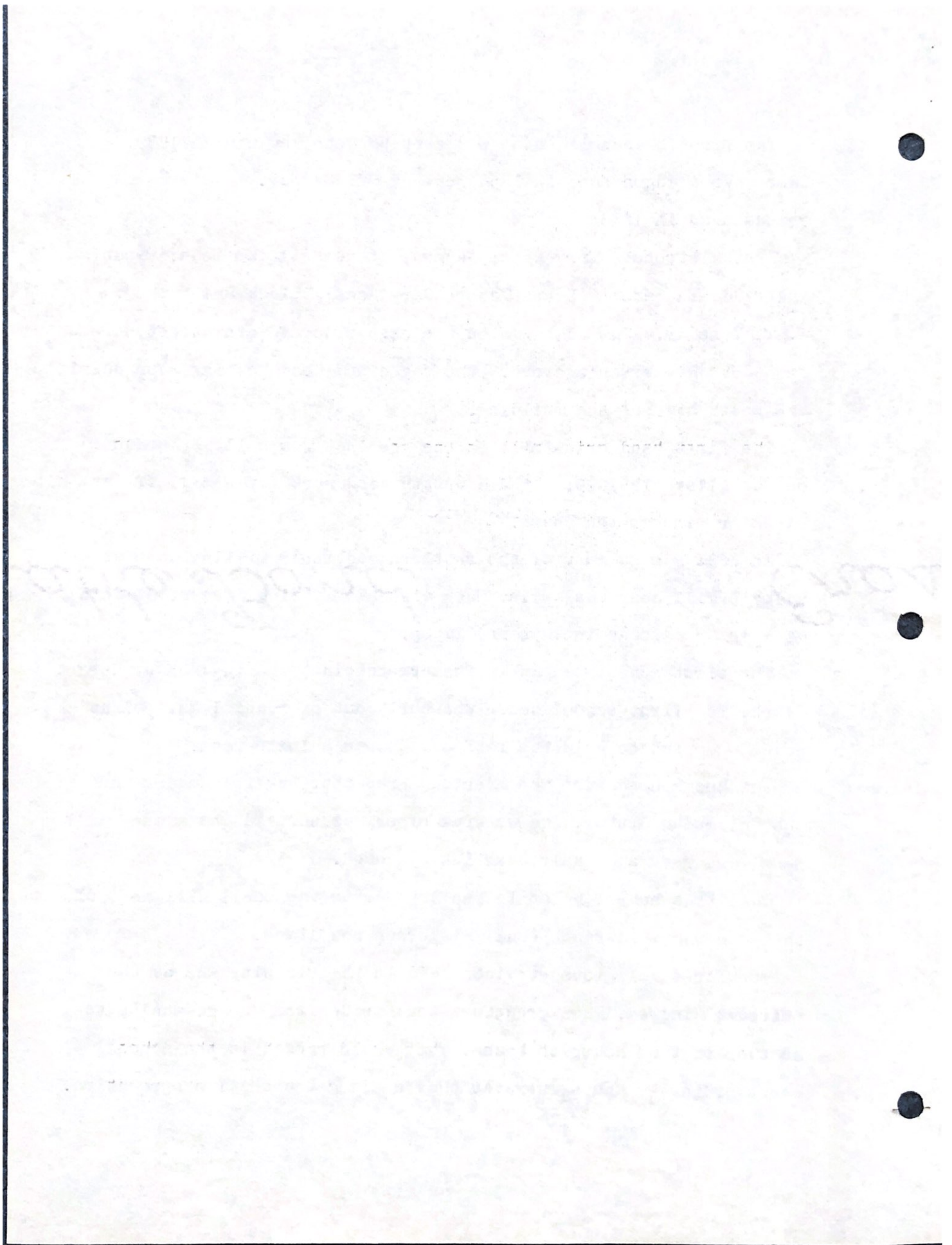
In 1834 a good many of the settlers had their milling done at
Riley's Mill near Kaskaskia. They also had milling done at Glide's
Mill in Georgetown in 1834 and later.

The first school taught in Denmark precinct was in 1825 by Robert
Clark. The first school house was built out of round logs. Weight
poles was used to hold the roof on. It was a 16x16 room.

7 The books used were the American Preceptor, English Reader and
the Columbian Orator. The writing paper was unruled and goose quill
pens were used and maple bark ink was used.

The first school house in Denmark was on the small hill west of
the town where Lawrence (Bud) Higgerson now lives.

The first religious services held in the vicinity was by the
"Circuit Riders". Those preachers would ride from one community to
another or from house to house. They would preach in the school
house or in the homes, wherever they could get a small congregation.



The Methodist, Presbyterian, and Baptists were the early denominations to visit the Denmark Community.

Methodist:

Rev. Benjamin Young was the first Methodist Circuit Rider in Illinois in 1804. His father resided in Randolph County. No doubt Young preached in Perry County several times.

Dickey Smith was the first Methodist preacher in Perry County. In 1830 the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized in this precinct with ten members. The minister who organized the church was French.

They held their meetings in a small house where Denmark is now. In 1835 they built their first church near Denmark.

Presbyterian:

The first Sabbath School was held in this precinct in 1859 with twenty eight scholars. It was the work of the Associate Reformed Presbyterians. Robert Crow and Green Derrington were teachers.

The Denmark Presbyterian Church was organized August 30, 1868 with nine members and one Elder, J. T. Coontom. It never had more than a nominal existence. The last minister was W.H. Templeton at last report.

They had a brick church on the lot where John Higgeson's store now stands. It was sold to the Baptists. They used it until 1902. After the Baptist quit using it for church purposes it was used as a residence until it became unfit for use. It was torn down and the brick used to wall a wall.

BAPTIST

The Pipestone Baptist church was organized in 1848 at the home of E.T. Rees near Denmark. Besides E.T. Rees and Elvira R., his wife, the original members were Independence Jenkins, R.S. Hood, Bolly Ernest and others.

Handwritten signature or name, possibly "H. H. H."

It was through the efforts of Elder R.G.Davis that this body was organized. They were a small band. Davis was the first pastor, but losing his health a year or so afterward, Elder H.S.Gordon became their pastor.

The church was admitted to membership in the Nine Mile Association in 1849 with a membership of sixteen. Pastor Elder Davis, preached the Associational discourse and the church was reported to be in promising condition, but upon the ascension of Elder Gordon to the pastorate the church became "Open Communion" in faith and practice, and was accordingly dropped from the fellowship of the Association at its meeting in 1851.

The church then purchased a brick building from the Presbyterians in Denmark and used it for services until 1902.

A frame building was erected on a lot across the street from the old building, donated by A.J.Axum. A.J.Rendleman was pastor at the time of its erection and preached the dedication sermon in 1902.

This building was destroyed by fire caused by lightening on Sunday, June 2, 1942. Rev. D.J. Unruh on that day used for his text Romans 8-28. (And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to ~~them~~ who are the called according to his purpose.) The fire started in the bell tower.

The new building erected after the fire was dedicated May 2, 1943.

On August 29, 1948 the church observed its 100th Anniversary with an all day meeting and a basket dinner at the noon hour. The Rev. Noethup preached at the morning service and Rev.D.J.Unruh the evening service.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
DIVISION OF THE PHYSICAL SCIENCES

REPORT OF THE
COMMISSIONER OF THE
BUREAU OF MINES
ON THE
PROGRESS OF THE
WORK DURING THE
YEAR 1907

BY
JOHN W. COOPER
CHIEF OF BUREAU

CHICAGO
PUBLISHED BY THE
UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS
1908

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS
54 EAST LAKE STREET
CHICAGO, ILL.

The names of the pastors and length of service from 1897 to date:

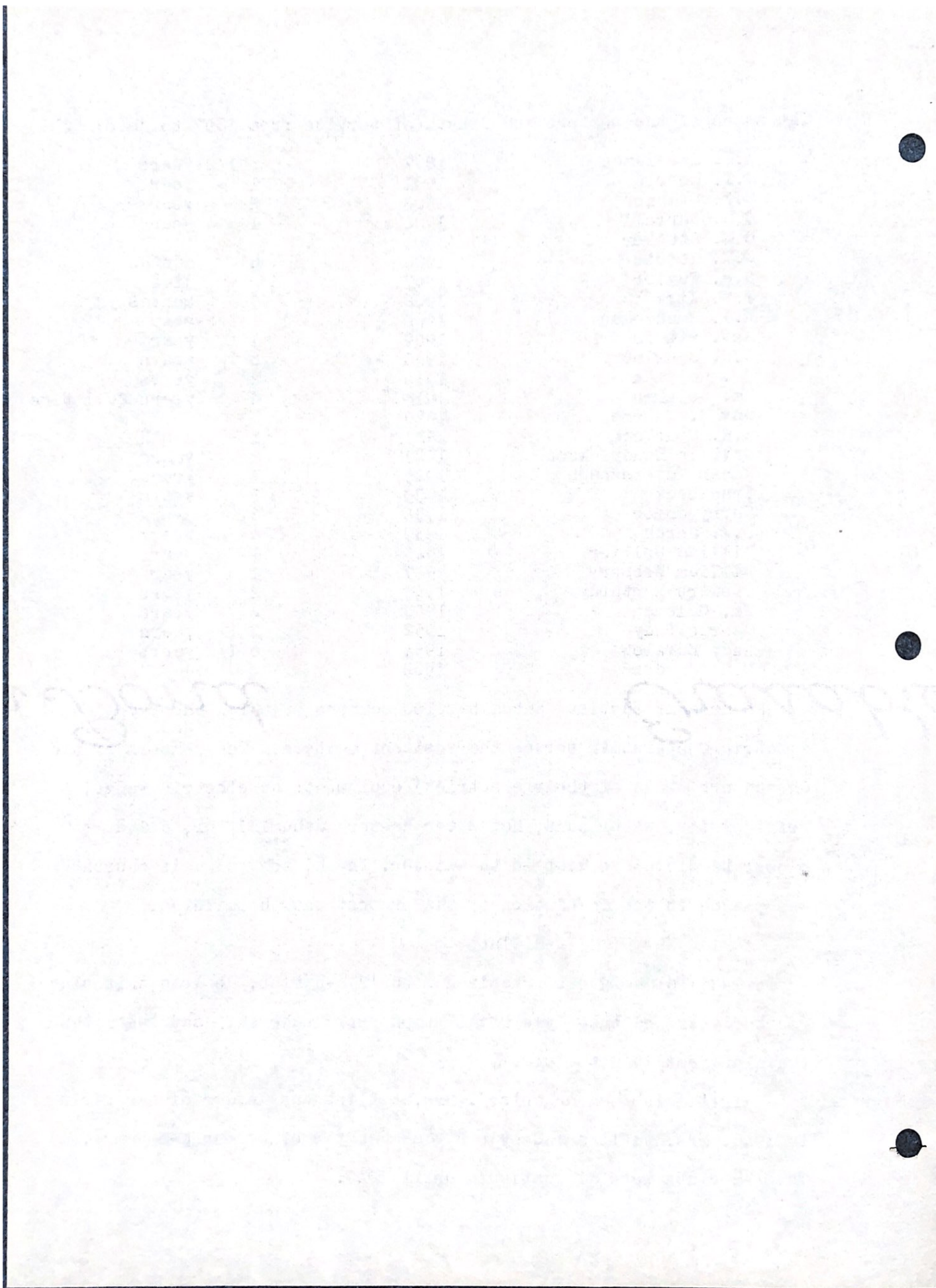
| | | |
|---------------------|------|-------------------|
| A.J. Rendleman | 1897 | 4 1/2 years |
| S.T. Morris | 1901 | 1 year |
| C.F. Statker | 1902 | 2 years |
| C.S. Carroll | 1904 | 1 year |
| C.F. Statker | 1905 | |
| W.W. Jacobs | 1906 | 6 months |
| C.R. Taylor | 1907 | died |
| J.F. Kirk | 1908 | 5 months |
| A.J. Rendleman | 1908 | 1 year |
| Rev. Pitman | 1909 | 1 year |
| W.R. Spurlock | 1910 | 6 years |
| Wm. Coleman | 1916 | 2 years |
| Wm. Coleman | 1918 | 2 years full time |
| Guy G. Chapman | 1920 | |
| W.R. Spurlock | 1921 | 1 month |
| Orville Hendrickson | 1921 | 2 years |
| Oscar Meyerscough | 1925 | 7 years |
| Ivan Beck | 1933 | 3 years |
| Harry Comer | 1935 | 3 years |
| D.J. Unruh | 1939 | 4 years |
| William Collier | 1945 | 1 year |
| William Webber | 1947 | 1 year |
| Stewart Northrup | 1948 | 2 years |
| Wm. Coleman | 1950 | 2 years |
| George Eddy | 1952 | 2 years |
| Audy Burklow | 1954 | 6 1/2 years |
| Paul Holder | 1962 | |

The Denmark Baptist Church has 160 members of which the Egyptian Electric Cooperative serves the resident members. The members of the Church are proud of their electrical equipment: an electric range, refrigerator, water pump, hot water heater, dehumidifier, and a blower to circulate heat in the winter. The history of this church was placed in the foundation of the present church building.

4-H Club:

In 1939 Waldo Egbert organized a boy's 4-H Club. He lead this club for one year and then Lyle Bigham took over leadership and was with the club from 1940 to 1942.

A girl's club was organized. Mrs. Stallins was leader of the girls in 1940. Mrs. Stallins and Lyle Bigham had the clubs for two years. The 4-H clubs were discontinued until 1947.



In 1947 Minnie Egbert and Lawrence Mohr started the clubs again. In 1951 Waldo Egbert took Lawrence Mohr's place and they led the clubs until 1958.

Mervin Smith and Mrs. Andy Burklow led the clubs for two years and then they both quit. In 1960 Waldo and Minnie Egbert took over the leadership and are still the leaders in 1964.

The girl's 4-H club is known as the Denmark Maids and the boy's club as the Denmark Danes.

The home of Chester Higgerson was purchased for a parsonage June 2, 1950. The church sold this parsonage to Ralph Higgerson and built a new parsonage on a lot ^{adjoining} the church property on the West.

The parsonage is modern with electric radiant heat. Bro. Robert Isaac was pastor at the time of the decision for the new parsonage.

The Denmark Church has a Missionary Society with Mrs. Ruby Holder as the President.

The Guild Group, a missionary society of young girls, was organized in Sept of 1964. They have already sent a box to Mather School in N.C.

The church does not have a Brotherhood, however does attend well what is known as our Area Brotherhood, of two associations, Judson and Lake Benton.

The church also has a very active Baptist Youth Fellowship. The Rees own lots 11 and 12 in the original survey of Denmark. Their home was built before the Civil War. A pine tree was set out on the lot. Mr. Rees always said he wanted to be buried under that tree. Mr. Rees enlisted in the Union Army and fought in the Civil War. He was killed in action and his remains was sent back to Denmark. He was buried under the pine tree as requested.

In the last part of the century his remains were taken up and taken to the Pinckneyville Cemetery and buried beside his wife, Mary.

The store burned and killed the pine tree. This happened in the first quarter of the 20th century. The home of Clarence Lindner stands where the store was.

In the late 1890's they carried the mail from Denmark to Cutler. Chris Wittmac owned the store and Post Office was in the store. Mr. Wittmac was the Post Master. The rural delivery was started in 1906 or 1907 so the Post Office at Denmark was closed. Mr. Wittmac was the last Post Master in Denmark. There was only one mail box in Denmark at that time. Mr. Wittmac sold his store to Mr. Wiehn about this time. He was noted for selling green coffee beans.

Mr. Wittmac passed away in 1908. The store was run by Mr. Hallbauer and Mr. Dillard for two or three years. Enos Bigham then bought the store. The store burned and Denmark was without a store for some time.

Mr. Carter built a small building on the south end of the lot where the brick church stood. Mr. Carter built a store on the north end of the lot. He did not have it too long until he sold it to John Higginson in 1935. He still runs the store in 1965.

In the summer time the old folks remember and recall playing on the church steps and swimming in the place where the Baptismal services were held.

They played ball at the old ball park. Today the old ball park is well lighted up with electric lights (Egyptian Electric Co-Op).

It was known that Granny Wackone bought many an acre of land with a pound of butter and a dozen of eggs.

In the early part of the 20th century the Mormon Missionaries came into this locality. They always traveled in pairs. They had to make their own way. John Brown who owned a large tract of land in 6-3 joined them.

#9

Some Mormons stayed with Mr. and Mrs. Todd one winter and taught the Bigham School.

William Jackson joined them and when he died, the Mormons started to drive off his cattle but were stopped and driven out.

The Quillman blacksmith shop located in the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of sec 35, T6S, R4W was started in 1904 by Elmer and Roy Quillman. Elmer got the first tools. They started in a 10x12 shed. They kept adding equipment until they had to enlarge the building to accomodate their equipment and business.

They started to making plows shares in 1912. They got a press and dies and would build plows. They had the pattern for the Sparta and Eaton plows of all sizes.

In 1941 they had to quit building plows, being unable to get steel on account of the war. George Quillman, son of Roy, opened the shop in the fall of 1947. He operated until the fall of 1951. The shop was closed until 1964. George Quillman started a general repair shop in the old shop in 1964.

Two Coal Companies own one half of the Denmark Precinct. The Southwestern Illinois Coal Corp. owns nearly all of the north half of the precinct. They have built a coal preparation plant and are using it now. It is located on the SW SW of sec 15, T6S, R4W.

Near Denmark, the Captain Mine's Shovel outranks all others.....
180 Cubic Yards At One Bite..."Captain" a 33 million pound coal shovel at the Southwestern Coal Corp. Mine near Denmark and Cutler is the world's largest shovel by anyone's standards.

Secluded in a 60 foot deep strip mine in south west Perry County, "Captain" last week began to eat away at the surface of the earth at the rate of 180 cubic yards a mouthful.

When "Captain" was constructed two other large shovels were "busted" to the rank of lieutenant.

Those shovels also hailed as "the World's largest" in their day are working in Peabody Coal Co. mines near Freeburg, Ill and near Madisonville, Ky.

"By any measuring standard--size of scoop, height or weight--Captain is the largest" a National Assoc.(Coal) executive said.

The new shovel is as tall as a 22-story building, while the Ky. shovel stands only 20 storied high. The Ky. shovel can gulp only 115 cubic yards of earth at a time and at 18 million tons weighs about half as much as Captain. The Freeburg shovel scoop capacity is 145 cubic yards.

Electrically operated, Captain uses enough power to supply a city of 20,000.

It has a boom that extends 215 feet and uses 1,800 tons of ballast as stabilizer. Two gyroscopes level the machine which can travel one-half mile an hour on it's tractor treads.

Even though the new shovel is the world's biggest, its actual significance is that it is a symbol of a continuing change in the Illinois coal industry.

Because of the competitive coal market, strip mining, which cuts labor costs, is more economical than underground mining.

In 1920 less than one percent of the coal mining in Illinois was done by strip mining. In 1960 statistics show strip mining accounted for nearly 50 percent of all Illinois Coal Mining.

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Much of Southern Illinois coal is near the surface of the earth. Geoligists confirm that it is economical to shovel away as much as 95 feet of earth--overburden--to get at the coal vein.

In 1960 the output of Illinois strip mines averaged 6,612 tons a miner, while the underground mines averaged 3,446 tons.

According to the National Coal Association, coal companies must continue to seek ways to reduce costs to compete with atomic energy for the public utilities market. About 50 percent of coal mined is used by electric generating plants, a sizable market.

The Southwestern Coal Corp. Mine began operating on October 1964. It is under contract with Commonwealth Edison to supply coal for its electric generating plant in Joliet. Some coal is also shipped to the Illinois Power Co. at Granite City, Ill.

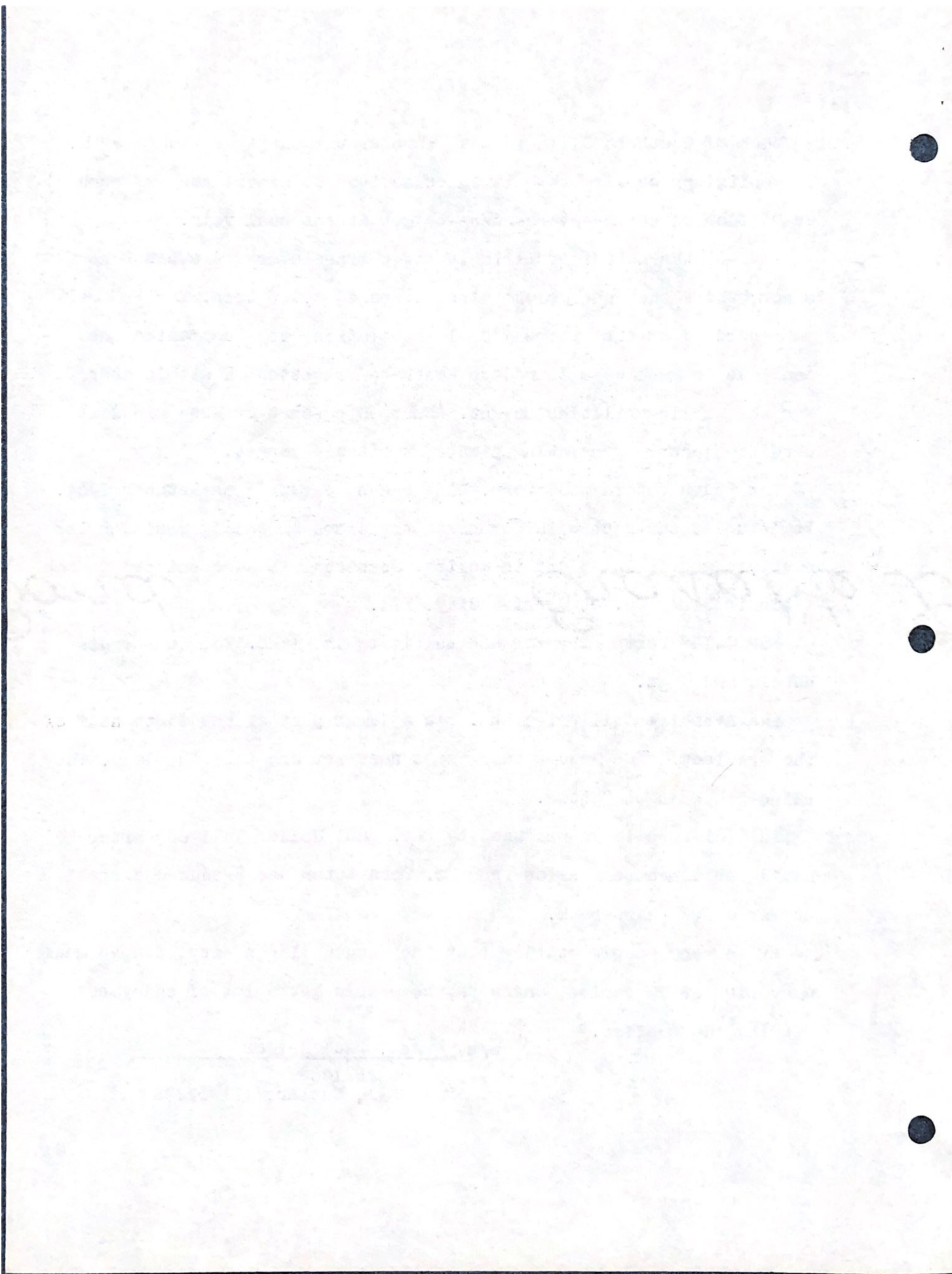
The Galum Farms care for and cultivate the land. They also raise cattle and hogs.

The Ayrshire Collieries Inc. own a large part of the south half of the precinct. The Meadow Lark Farms care for and farm the land. They raise black Angus Cattle.

This history is re-produced by Rev. Paul Holder in 1968, after having obtained permission from Mr. Pona Eaton who produced a small number a few years back.

By so many people stating that they would like a copy, I have made a quantity of 70 copies, and hope the people get a lot of enjoyment reading the booklet.

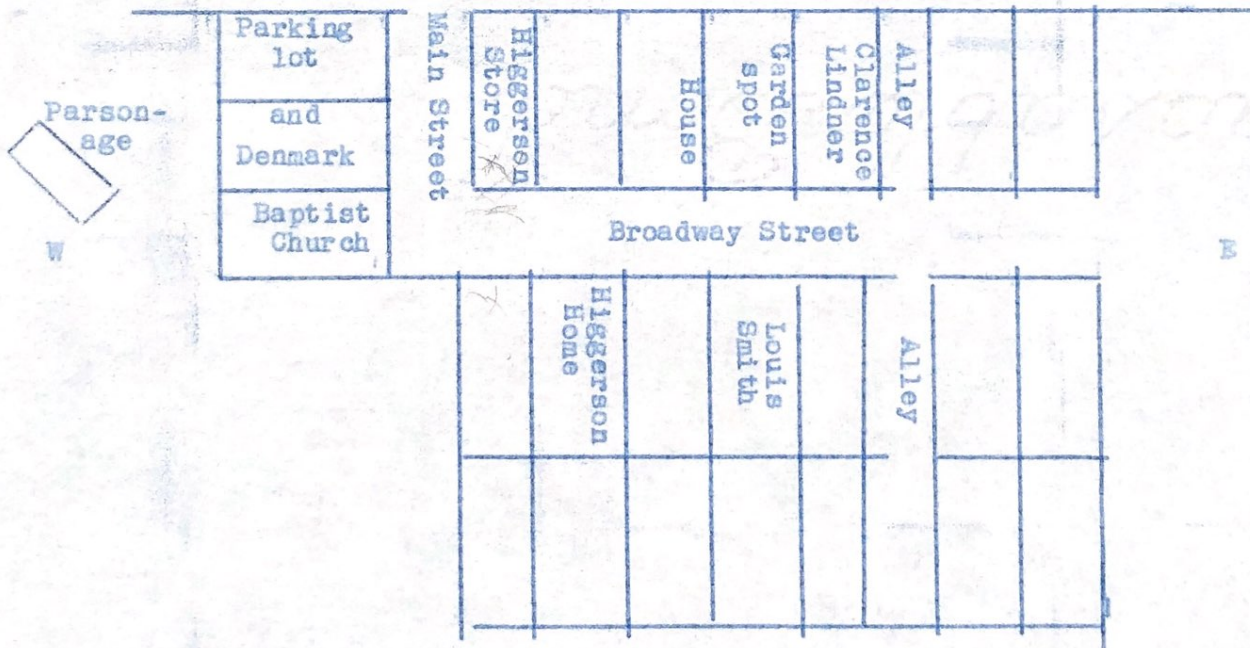
s/s Rev. Paul Holder
Dec 26 1968
RFD#1, Cutler, Ill 62238



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Main road through Denmark, and

South half of street is Chester Street



S

1. The first part of the paper is a list of the names of the persons who have been elected to the office of the President of the United States.

2. The second part of the paper is a list of the names of the persons who have been elected to the office of the Vice President of the United States.

3. The third part of the paper is a list of the names of the persons who have been elected to the office of the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

4. The fourth part of the paper is a list of the names of the persons who have been elected to the office of the President of the Senate.

5. The fifth part of the paper is a list of the names of the persons who have been elected to the office of the President of the Supreme Court.

SHOP: Left Ardell Evans

R ight. J.L.Tessier--Owner
and operator of blacksmith shop.

Did you hear the story of the man who came into the blacksmith shop and picked up a horseshoe that had not been cooled, that the smith had just taken out of the forge? He threw it down immediately. The blacksmith asked if it was hot, the man said "No, it just doesn't take me long to look at a horseshoe.

2525 COTTON FIBER
SOUTHWORTH CO. U.S.A.
PAPERBOND

STORE AND POST OFFICE: LEFT TO RIGHT...ROBERT PERRY, FERN CRAIN,
HARRY TESSIER, THEODORE WIEHN, OLLIE WILSON, JOHN COTTOM,
TONE SMITH (IN BUGGY) RUEBEN QUILLMAN, AND FATHER, GEORGE
QUILLMAN. ON PORCH..TWO UNIDENTIFIED SALESMEN.

BASEBALLE BOND
SOUTH WORTH CO. U.S.A.
COTTON FIBER

CHURCH: ON CHURCH STEPS: LEFT TO RIGHT _____, JENNIE MITCHELL,

NETTIE BRADLEY, JAMES THOMAS, CLARISSA COTTOM, LELA SCHUPBACH,
AND NEOLA CONNER.

BACK ROW L TO R...ESSIE TESSIER, _____, FRED SCHUP-
BACH, JEANNETTE EGBERT, WALTER RUSHING, _____, ROBERT PERRY,
FERN CRAIN, OLLIE WILSON, TONE SMITH, LAWRENCE EGBERT, _____,
ISAAC REESE, JOHN COTTOM, HARRY TESSIER...

FRONT ROW L TO R.....~~ERACE~~ COTTOM, MYRTLE UHLES, HARVEY MITCHELL?
EZRA TESSIER, BERT UHLES, FLOYD CONNER, JUANITA CONNER, ALICE TESSIER,
AND KENNETH UHLES.

RACEPASE BOND
SOUTHWORTH CO. U.S.A.
25% COTTON FIBER

IN REBUTTAL OF "DENMARK BAPTIST CHURCH" by Rev. Paul Holder,
RFD #1, Cutler, Il 62238...written 26 December 1968.

By

Elizabeth E. Spurgeon

- - - - -

- Item #1 Shows that DENMARK was platted 1 Apr 1860 and that William Boan ran the only general store there. No mention of a Chris Wittmack. 1883.
- Item #2 Proof of the survey.
- Item #3 Some facts regarding previous owners of the store.
- Item #4 Regarding establishment, etc. of the DENMARK POSTOFFICE.
- Item #5 Comment regarding fact that Wittmac named the place for his homeland of DENMARK after arriving there.

Proof from Office of County Clerk's birth record book that neither Christian F. or Emelie, his wife, were natives of DENMARK.
- Item #6 Additional proof from the 12th census of the USA as to the nativity of Christian Wittmack, his wife, and each of their parents.
- Item #7 Shows that William Boan owned the store until 30 June, 1883 as per item #1.
- Item #8 One more proof as to why Chris Wittmack didn't name DENMARK.

Notes collected by
Elizabeth E. Spurgeon,
710 Taffee St.,
Pinckneyville, Il 62274
1983

IN REBUTAL OF "DELMAR BAPTIST CHURCH" by Rev. Paul Holder,

REV #1, Coffey, II 62236... written 26 December 1983.

By

Elizabeth E. Spurgeon

Item #1 Shows that DELMAR was listed 1 Apr 1860 and that William Boen ran the only general store there. No mention of a Chris Wittmack.

Item #2 Proof of the survey.

Item #3 Some facts regarding previous owners of the store.

Item #4 Regarding establishment, etc. of the DELMAR BAPTIST CHURCH.

Item #5 Comment regarding fact that Wittmack named the place for his homeland of DELMAR after arriving there.

Proof from Office of County Clerk's birth record book that neither Christian F. or Isabelle, his wife, were natives of DELMAR.

Item #6 Additional proof from the 1880 census of the USA as to the nativity of Christian Wittmack, his wife, and each of their parents.

Item #7 Shows that William Boen owned the store until 30 June, 1883 as per item #1.

Item #8 One more proof as to why Chris Wittmack didn't name DELMAR.

Notes collected by
Elizabeth E. Spurgeon,
710 Taffie St.,
Pineknobville, II 62234
1983

McDonnough's History of Randolph, Monroe, and Perry Counties, Ill.

- 1883 -

p/432 SOUTHWESTERN - Perry County

DENMARK

The little hamlet of Denmark, is situated in the western part of the South Western precinct, the nearest railroad station being Cutler, some five miles distant. The town was laid out by John D. Rees, on the northwest quarter of the north-west quarter of section twenty-four, in township six south, range 4 west, and was surveyed and platted by Robert Steele, county surveyor, on the first day of April, 1860. It formerly bore the euphonious name of "Jack Town".

The first house was built by John D. Rees, whose family, and those of several Canadian-French, were the first to settle in that section. The house was a small frame. John D. Rees opened the first store, and the post-office was kept by Brown. There are two handsome church buildings in the town, belonging respectively, to the Presbyterian and Baptist denominations. Also a neat school-house.

Present Business

Postmistress - Mary Rees

General Store - William Boan

Wagonmaker - James Eaton

Blacksmith - J. L. Tessier

Dressmaker - Mary Rees

- - - - -

Copied from the above reference by
Elizabeth E. Spurgeon,
710 Taffee Street,
Pinckneyville, Il 62274

McDonough's History of Randolph, Monroe, and Perry Counties, Ill.

- 1883 -

1883 - Perry County

1883

The little hamlet of Newark, is situated in the western part of the South Western precinct, the nearest railroad station being Gellert, some five miles distant. The town was laid out by John W. Rees, on the northwest quarter of the north-west quarter of section twenty-four, in township six south, range 4 west, and was surveyed and platted by Robert Steele, county surveyor, on the first day of April, 1880. It formerly bore the eponymous name of "Jack Town". The first house was built by John L. Rees, whose family, and those of several Canadian-French, were the first to settle in that section. The house was a small frame. John L. Rees opened the first store, and the post-office was kept by Brown. There are two handsome churches in the town, belonging respectively, to a Presbyterian and Baptist denominations. Also a neat school-house.

Present Business

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|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| Postmaster - Mary Rees | General Store - William Bean |
| Wagonmaker - James Eaton | Blacksmith - J. L. Foster |
| Preacher - Mary Rees | |

Could find no above reference by
 Elizabeth A. Johnson,
 710 Olive Street,
 St. Louis, Mo.

PERRY COUNTY, ILLINOIS, DEED RECORD "S" p/242.....

PLAT OF DENMARK

Plat of Denmark submitted to J. D. REESE, Proprietor under date of 1 April 1860. Robert Steele, County Surveyor.

Filed for record in the Perry County Court House on 25 May 1866.

See this record for further information.

- - - - -

This survey was made upon the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of section 24, township 6S, range 4W of the 3rd prime meridian.

The lots were 40' x 110' and it was noted that Edgar's addition was the three blocks on the west side of Main Street.

- - - - -

So we see here that this parcel was platted in 1860 by John D.

Reese and only he had the naming of it as DENMARK. WHY, I don't know.

- - - - -

Copied from the court house records by
Elizabeth E. Spurgeon,
710 Taffee St.,
Pinckneyville, Ill 62274
August 12, 1983

... ..

PLANTATION

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McDonnough's History of Randolph, Monroe, and Perry Cos., Ill. 1883.

List of Partial Subscribers in Twp. 6S, R4W. Among others.....

BOAN, William Denmark^{PO} Res. Denmark Gen. Mcht. A native of
Missouri ^{who} and settled here in 1863.

E. H. JUSTIS, wife of William Boan, Native of Perry
Co., Ill. since 1848.

- - - - -

Perry County, Illinois Marriage Records. Among others.....

Wm. Boan and Issabele H. Justice 21 Jan 1864 R.F. Williams JP.

- - - - -

1850 census Perry County, Ill. Taken 5 Sep 1850 - Pt of Dist. #7.

| | | |
|------------------------|---------------|---------|
| 308/309 REECE, JOHN D. | Age 30 Farmer | b. Ill. |
| Mary | 23 | / |
| Josaphine | 7 | |
| Eliza | 5 | |
| Cyrus B. | 1 | |
| BRADLEY, JOHN F. | 17 Farmer | |

- - - - -

Mary Reece was the daughter of JACOB SHORT and Elizabeth _____
who lived next door (307/308). See probate of Jacob's estate in
box #340 Perry County Circuit Clerk's Office.

- - - - -

Perry County, Illinois Marriage Records. Among others.....

John D. Rees and Mary Short 6 Jan 1842 Samuel Pyatt JP.

John D. Rees was the son of Edward Hampton Rees Sr. See Perry
Co., Ill. deed record "K" pp 511/12. Represents sale of land by
the heirs as concerns part of the W $\frac{1}{2}$ of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ sec 9, T6S, R1W.

- - - - -

Perry County Circuit Court Probate files, Among others.....

John D. Rees/Reese Box 336

- - - - -

Chenoweth's History of Randolph, Monroe, and Perry Cos., Ill., 1883.

List of Partial Subscribers in Twp. 33, R. 1. Among others.....

Edw. William Lennick, son of Lennick Gen. West. A native of Missouri and settled here in 1863.

F. H. T. 1848, wife of William Perry Native of Perry Co., Ill. since 1848.

Perry County, Illinois Marriage Records. Among others.....
 Wm. Boon and Isabelle H. Justice 21 Jan 1864 R. 1. Williams Tp.

1850 census Perry County, Ill. taken 5 Sep 1850 - 17 of Dist. 47.

| | | |
|------------------------|---------------|---------|
| 307/309 RHOOD, JOHN D. | Age 30 Farmer | P. 111. |
| Mary | 23 | |
| Josephine | 7 | |
| Eliza | 5 | |
| Arthur L. | 1 | |
| BRADLEY, JOHN L. | IV Farmer | |

Mary Reese was the daughter of JACOB RHOOD and Elizabeth who lived next door (307/308) see probate of Jacob's estate in box 330 Perry County Circuit Clerk's office.

Perry County, Illinois Marriage Records. Among others.....

John D. Reese and Mary Rhoad 6 Jan 1848 Garretts Ferry W.

John D. Reese was the son of Edward Hanson Reese Sr. see Perry Co., Ill. probate "A" in 211/12. Hanson's sale of land by and before an executor part of the W. of the N. 2, T. 2S, R. 1W.

Perry County Circuit Court Probate Files. Among others.....

John D. Reese/Reese box 330

ILLINOIS PLACE NAMES

Compiled By

James N. Adams (1911 - 1965)

Distributed by Illinois State Historical Library

- - - - -

DENMARK Post Office established 18 Dec 1865; discontinued
17 Jan 1876; re-established 28 Feb 1876; discontinued
15 Nov 1906; now RFD Cutler. Formerly Jack Town.

- - - - -

Since this place was already surveyed as DENMARK by
1 April 1860 the post office has always been known by that
name. EES

- - - - -

ILLINOIS TOWN SHIPS

Compiled by

James H. Adams (1911 - 1962)

Distributed by Illinois State Historical Library

LEWIS Post Office established 16 Dec 1862; discontinued
17 Jan 1870; re-established 28 Feb 1870; discontinued
15 Nov 1900; now RFD Center. Formerly Jack Town.

Since this place was always surveyed as LEWIS by
1 April 1860 the post office has always been known by that

name. LES

Re: Naming of the town of Denmark by Chris Wittmac....page 2

- - - - -

.....It kept this name until Chris Wittmac came to "Jack Town" and bought a store. He did not like the name of the town, as he was a native of Denmark. In some way they gave the name Denmark since.....

- - - - -

I have not checked the early census of Denmark but think that birth records found in the County Clerk's office in Pinckneyville should be proof enough that Chris Wittmac was not a Dane from Denmark.

Birth rcd 1/180.... Wittmack.....Female....3rd child born to this mother. Date of birth 9 July 1886 at Denmark.

Father - Christian F. Wittmack age 37. German Nat. Born-Germany

Mother - Emelie Dudenbostel age 22. German Nat. Born-Germany

Christian F. Wittmack, storekeeper.

Anna Hoops, Campbell Hill, Ill. reported birth.

- - - - -

Birth rcd 1/216....Witmack, Lillie Maria....Female....5th child born to this mother. Date of birth 27 Nov. 1889.

Father - Christian Witmack age 40. German Nat. Born-Germany

Mother - Emilie Dudenbostel age 26. German Nat. Born-Germany

Christian Witmack - storekeeper

Copied from the above records 5/19/81
by E. Spurgeon, 710 Taffee,
Pinckneyville, Ill 62274

ADDITIONAL PROOF THAT CHRIS WHITMACK/WITTMACK WHO WAS SUPPOSED TO
HAVE NAMED ORIGINAL "~~JACK TOWN~~" FOR HIS HOMELAND.....
Denmark

12th census of the United States of America.
State of Illinois, County of Perry, South Western Precinct.
Taken 13 June 1900 by John McLaughlin, Enumerator.

Sheet No. Nine (9), lines 98-100 incl., dwelling #168, family #181(?)

WITTMACK, Chris b.Sep 1848 age 51 md 17yrs b.Germany;pts.b.Germany

Emeline b.Feb 1863 age 37 md 17yrs b.Germany;pts.b.Germany

[illegible]

100 100 100 100 100 100 100 100

~~QUESTION...Is there a DENMARK in Germany? I can't find it.~~

E. Spurgeon

w

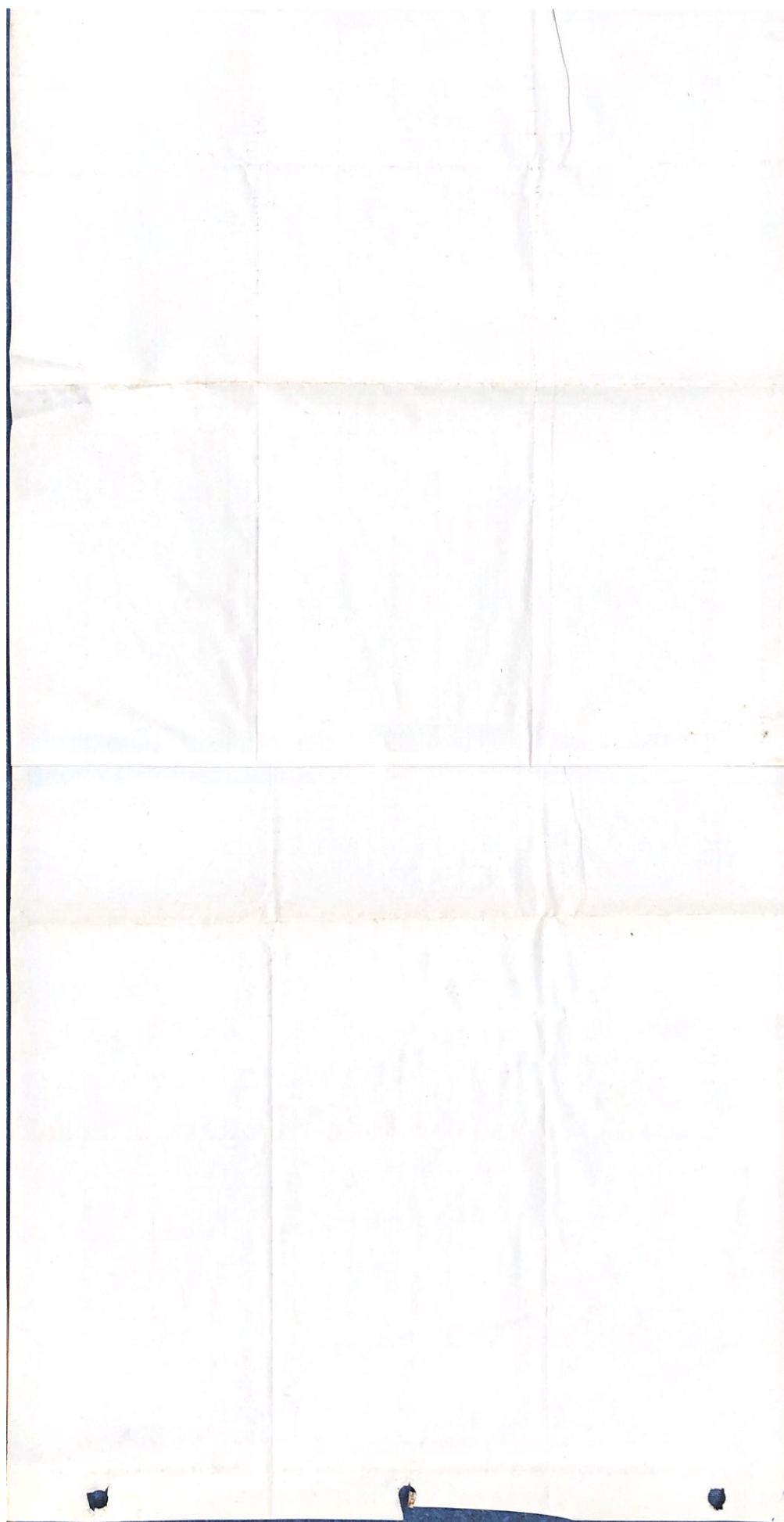
Supervisor's District No. 12 } Sheet No. 9

Supervisor's District No. 56 }
 Enumeration District No. 9 }

Ward of city, -----

Enumerator:

[illegible]



[illegible]

attended school
my month
for

1900 Emmae
Danmark

Rural town of Denmark fading only history, 10 residents left

By Belinda Heine

Southern Illinoisan Correspondent

The small settlement of Denmark on the Pyatt Blacktop is a mere shadow of the town that used to thrive there. With coal-mining on all four sides, and fewer than 10 townspeople left, the town bravely, but barely, lives on.

According to several "old-timers" and an unpublished booklet written by the Rev. Paul Holder, the first settlers, many French Canadians, came into the Denmark precinct as early as 1818. The town was laid out by John D. Rees, and surveyed and platted on April 1, 1860. It was first called "John's Town", and later "Jack Town". It received its present name when Chris Witmac, a native of Denmark, became the owner of the first store in the town. As an honorary gesture the town was named for his homeland.

The first school, a 16-by-16 room, was built in 1825 out of roundlogs, and the teacher was by Robert Clark. A second school was built in 1894. It was burned in 1934 by a juvenile arsonist. He was later jailed for setting other fires as well. The third school was built in 1934, and was used

until the early 1950s, still just one room. The building was destroyed in 1982. In the early schools, sleigh riding was allowed at noon, and Halloween pranks included setting a wagon on the school roof.

A circuit-riding preacher held the only type of church service in the Denmark territory until 1835 when the first church was built. Many other churches followed, but the Denmark Baptist Church is the only one that remains.

By 1883, the town had a general store, a wagon maker, dress maker, a black smith shop, a wood working shop and a post office. The Denmark Post Office was the only one between Du Quoin and Chester for many years. The nearest railroad was still five miles away in Cutler.

In the beginning of this century, Denmark was a pretty rough place to be. Although the town never had a tavern, drunks often interrupted the church services. Fights were common. Once a man even was stabbed, and someone tried to dynamite the church, but failed. Town boys from Cutler refused to venture out to Denmark, but by

1930, things had begun to calm down.

The store had burned in 1917, and was not rebuilt until 1930, by Walter Carter. He bought eggs, poultry, and cream from the farmers, and even stayed open late so that the local boys could enjoy a few hands of cards. The favorite spot was the bench. Here tall tales were spun hours at a time, each man trying to out-do the other. Carter even opened up the store on Sunday evening just for the loafers. After all, the nearest entertainment spot was 10 miles away at the Percy theater.

One of the earliest local coal mines was the Higgerson Coal Mine a mile out of town. This underground mine started in 1933 and lasted into the early 1950s.

Denmark has now all but faded away. The old store still stands beside the church as a reminder of days gone by, and of a town that used to exist. By looking at the small and sleepy town of today's Denmark, one cannot imagine its rough past, but it's there, hidden between the buildings of yesteryear, and in the minds of those who remember it well.

Perry County Deed Records....

Vol. 14 p/356 Wm. Boan and Issabell H., his wife, of Perry Co., Ill. in consideration of \$200.00 paid, grant to Christian F. Wittmack of Perry County, Ill., lots three (3) and four (4) in the town of DENMARK in the NW NW sec. 24, T6S, R4W.

Dated this 30 June 1883. Filed for record 30 June 1883.

/s/ William Boan

her
Isabella (X) H. Boan
mark

Acknowledged in Perry County, Ill. by R. H. Williams JP.

- - - - -

I think this must be when he came to Perry County and the name of the town was DENMARK twenty-three years before this.

Lots 3 & 4 are where the store stood.

- - - - -

Deed Rcd 60 p/203 ANNA WITTMACK to HALLBAUER & DILLARD. In consideration of \$5.00/paid, grants Tract 2 original plat of Denmark. Filed 3 Jan 1910.

/s/ Anna Wittmack

- - - - -

Deed Rcd 60 p/273 ANNA WITTMACK TO THEO. WIEHN. Cons. \$4200.00 paid, grants part of the SW of sec 13; and part of the SE of sec 14, T6S, R4W..16 June 1910. Filed for record 1 July 1910.

(This is on the north side of the road across from the store.)EES

- - - - -

Copied by Elizabeth E. Spurgeon,
710 Taffee, Pinckneyville, Il 62274
August 12, 1983

Perry County Deed Records.....
Vol. 14 p. 356 Wm. Loan and Isabelle H., his wife, of Perry Co.,
111. in consideration of \$200.00 paid, grant to Christian F.
Wittmack of Perry County, 111., lots three (3) and four (4) in
the town of DEWEAR in the NW sec. 24, T2S, R4E.
Dated this 30 June 1883. Filed for record 30 June 1883.

Witness
Isabelle (X) E. Loan
mark
Acknowledged in Perry County, 111. by W. H. Williams Jr.

I think this must be when he came to Perry County and the
name of the town was DEWEAR twenty-three years before this.
Lots 3 & 4 are where the store stood.

Deed Vol. 60 p. 203 ANNA WITTMACK to HALLAMER & WILLARD. In con-
sideration of \$5.00 paid, grants Tract 2 original plat of Dewear.
Filed 3 Jan 1910. /s/ Anna Wittmack

Anna Rod 60 p. 203 ANNA WITTMACK TO THEO. WILSON. Cont. \$4500.00
paid, grants part of the SW of sec 13; and part of the SE of sec
14, T2S, R4E. Filed for record 1 July 1910.
(This is on the north side of the road across from the store.)

Copied by Elizabeth F. Carpenter,
Vic Taffee, Winchester, IL 62454
August 28, 1983

Birth and census records show that Chris. Wittmack was born in Germany in 1848. Since the survey and plat of DENMARK was made in 1860 he would have been only about twelve (12) years old at the time....hardly a storeowner.

- - - - -

The mistery still remains as to why JOHN D. REESE called the place DENMARK.

- - - - -

Notes made by Elizabeth E. Spurgeon,
710 Taffee, Pinckneyville, Il 62274
August 14, 1983

Birth and census records show that Chris Wittmack was born in Germany in 1848. Since the survey and plot of BIRKBECK was filed in 1883 he would have been only about twelve (12) years old at the time....hardly a storeowner.

The mystery still remains as to why JOHN D. REICH called the place BIRKBECK.

Notes made by Elizabeth L. Sprague,
719 Teller, Lincoln, Ill., 11-2-54
August 14, 1983